

# After the Revolution: The Articles of Confederation & the Constitution

Section 1:

The Articles of Confederation

Section 2:

The New Nation Faces Challenges

Section 3:

Creating the Constitution

Section 4:

Ratification



# Section 1: The Articles of Confederation

**Day 1: The Articles of Confederation**

# **Roots of the Constitution**

- Declaring independence was a bold move
- Next step was to create new government
- They would gather ideas from many sources

# They took ideas from:

- Magna Carta
  - No one above the law
- The English Bill of Rights
  - Rights of the Citizen
- Enlightenment Movement
  - Promoted Logic, Reason & improvement of Society
- John Locke
  - Natural rights of life, liberty, pursuit of happiness
- Baron de Montesquieu
  - Government structure of separation of powers



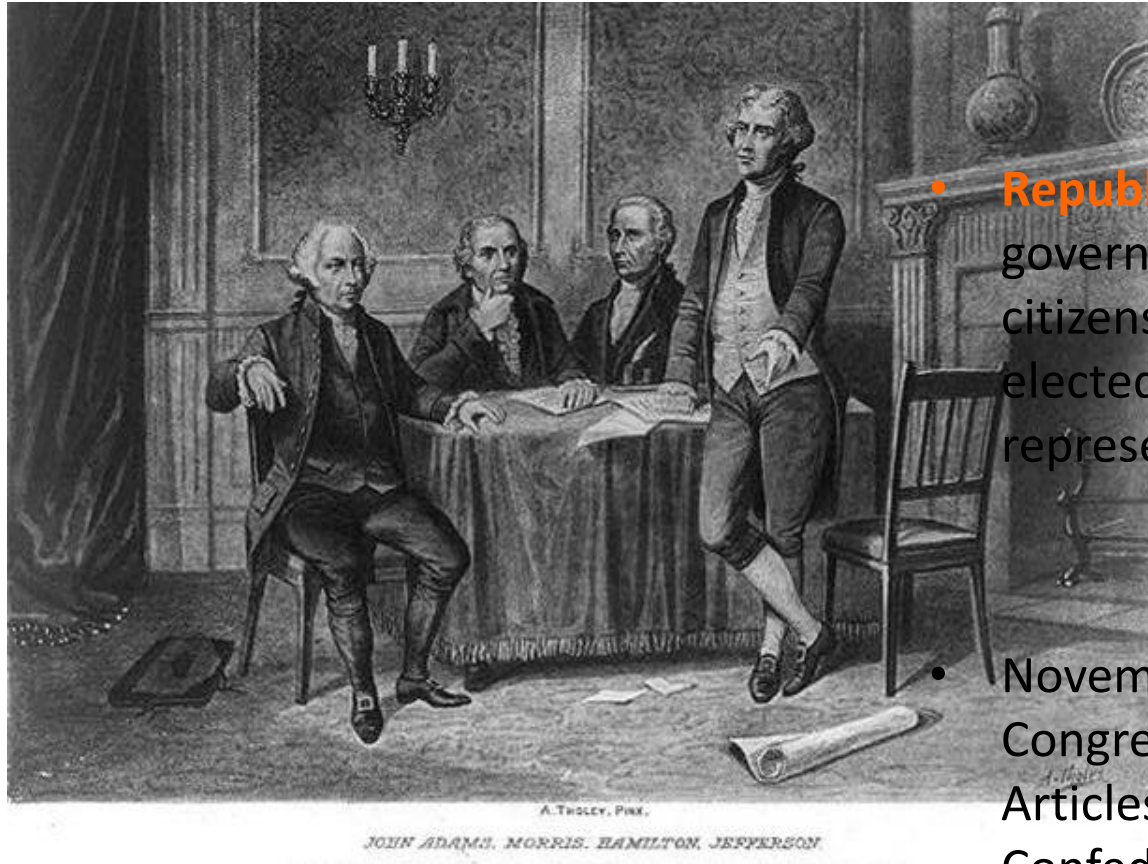
*Montesquieu*

# State Constitutions

- May 1776 Continental Congress charged the States with creating their own state Constitutions
- State constitutions
  - created limited governments
  - Had rules to protect the rights of citizens
  - Legislatures were **Bicameral**
    - Two-house system of government

# VOTING

- Under British rule only free, white, property owners could vote.
- Many state constitutions expanded **suffrage** (the right to vote) by allowing any white man who paid taxes to vote.
- Only land owners could hold public office.



- **Republic** – a government in which citizens rule through elected representatives
- November 1777 - Congress adopted the Articles of Confederation
- Articles were ratified in 1781

## Forming a Republic

John Adams, Morris, Hamilton, Jefferson  
Leaders of the Continental Congress; Augustus Tholey, 1894

# Articles of Confederation

## Strengths

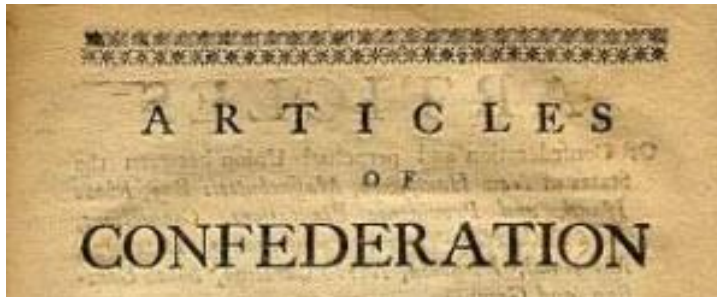
- Congress could settle conflicts among states, make coins, borrow money, and make treaties with other countries and with Native Americans.
- Congress could ask for money and soldiers.
- *States had the power to refuse these requests.*
- Government did not have a president or a national court system.
- Each state had one vote in Congress



# Articles of Confederation

## Weaknesses

- The states had more power than central government
- Congress was only branch of government
- Congress could not regulate trade nor tax— contributes to the economic problems of the US.
- Did not have a national court system or president.
- States could refuse Congresses request for money and soldiers.
- Amendments required approval of all 13 states
- Failed to protect the ideas of individual liberty.



- Articles of Confederation- 1<sup>st</sup> Const. of the U.S.—  
passed Nov. 15, 1777, but not approved until 1781
  - Maryland refused to ratify
    - felt other states should give up land claims first.
  - Thomas Jefferson assured Maryland the western lands would become NEW states-not increase the size of existing states.
- Established the 1<sup>st</sup> national govt. of the U.S.

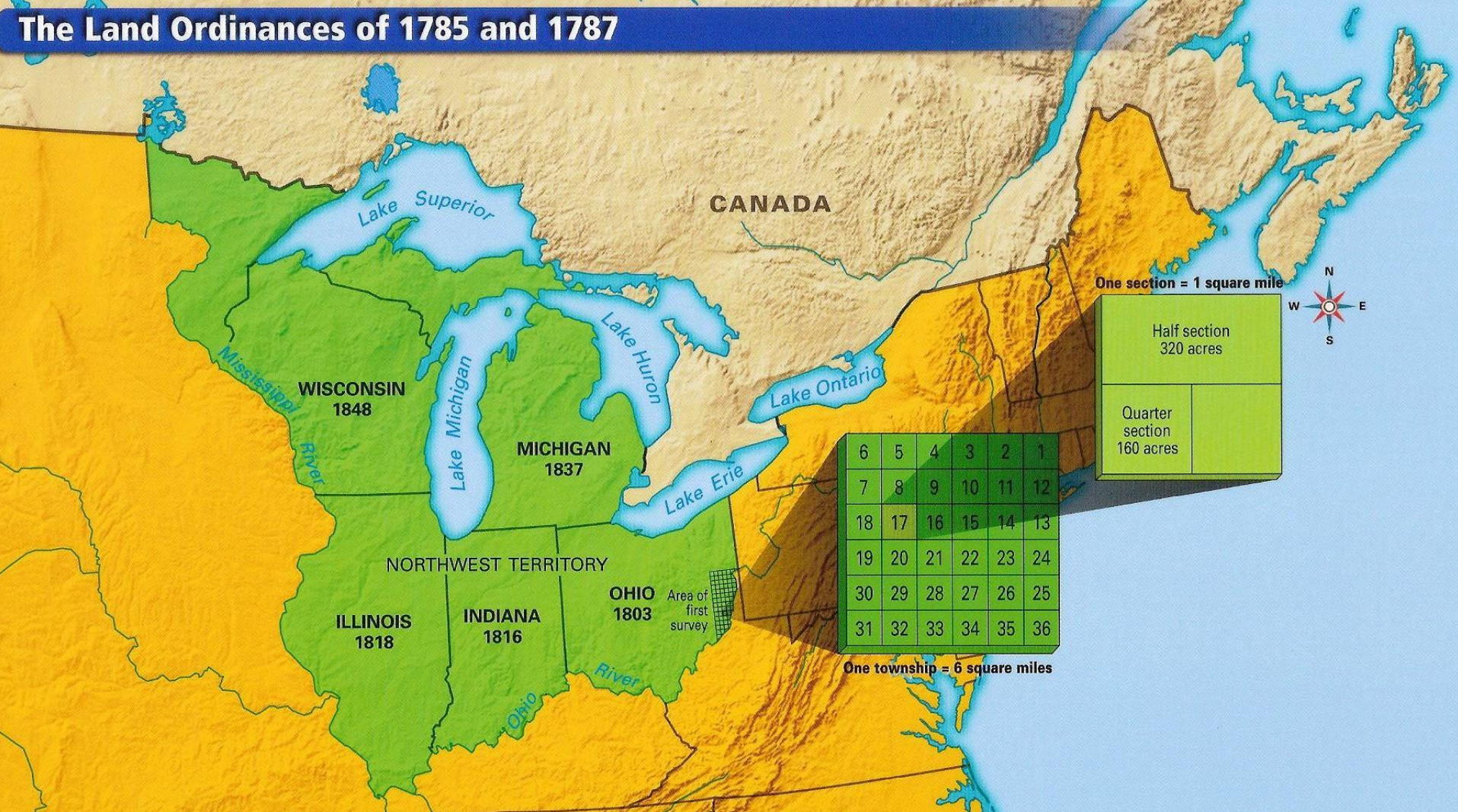
# New Land Policies

- Articles of Confederation had no provisions for adding new states
- States handed over their land claims to the government
- Congress passed **Land Ordinance of 1785**
- System for surveying and dividing the western lands





# The Land Ordinances of 1785 and 1787



## •THE LAND ORDINANCE OF 1785

- System used for dividing the territories.
  - Split into townships of 36 square miles
  - Divided into 36 lots of 640 acres, one lot =1 sq. mile
  - 1 lot reserved for public school, 4 lots for veterans
  - Remaining lots sold to public



# The Northwest Ordinance of 1787



- Established the Northwest Territory
- **Created a Political System for the region**
- Included areas that are now:
  - Illinois
  - Indiana
  - Michigan
  - Ohio
  - Wisconsin
  - Minnesota (part of)
- These future states were called territories
- Required public education to be provided
- Slavery was banned in Northwest Territory



# Northwest Ordinance of 1787

- Formed a political system for the region.
- Protected civil liberties
- Created a system for bringing new states to the Union
  - Ruled by a governor appointed by Congress until ready for statehood
  - When the population reached 60,000 they could draft a constitution & become a state

# RSA:

## **If YOU were there ...**

You live in a town in New England during the 1770s. In the town meeting, people are hotly debating about who will have the right to vote. Most think that only men who own property should be able to vote. Some think that all property owners—men and women—should have that right. A few others want all free men to have the vote. Now it is time for the meeting to decide.

**How would you have voted on this issue?**

### **Consider reasons to LIMIT voting:**

- Voters should be taxpayers.
- Voters should be educated.
- Voters should be eligible to hold political office.
- Voters should be adult citizens.

### **Consider reasons to WIDEN voting:**

- All people should have a voice because government applies to all people.
- All people have rights.
- All people are equal under the law.



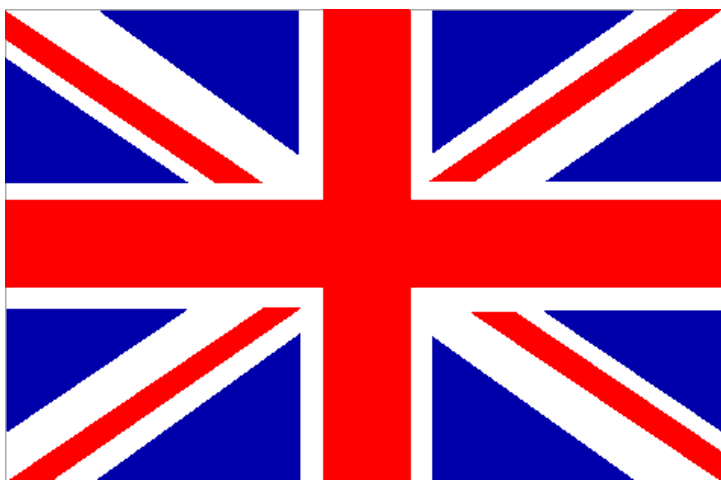
## Section 2: The New Nation Faces Challenges

### Day 3: Shay's Rebellion



# Relations with Other Countries

- Under the Articles, Congress could not force states to provide soldiers for an army.
- Continental Army disbands after the Revolution.
  - Causes problems;
    - 1.Hard to enforce treaties
    - 2.Hard to enforce removal of British in the Ohio Valley area
- Congress could not force states to help pay foreign debts.



# Problems with Britain

- Britain continued to occupy strategic forts in Great Lakes area
- Britain closed off many ports to the U. S., preventing trade in Britain and West Indies
- Britain forced Americans to pay higher **tariffs**
  - US businesses had to raise their prices
  - British goods were then cheaper than American.
- 1785 - John Adams went to London but British refused to back down

# Problems with Spain



- In 1784 Spain closed off Lower Mississippi River & port of New Orleans
- cutting off American trade with the West
- Farmers could not export their crops
- Congress did not have the power to fix the problem



# The United States Faces Trade Barriers

0 150 300 Miles  
0 150 300 Kilometers

**AMERICAN  
TRADE  
ROUTE**

**EXPORTS  
TO BRITAIN**

**BLOCKADE**

ATLANTIC  
OCEAN

**WEST  
INDIES  
TRADE**

**BLOCKADE**

New Orleans

Gulf of Mexico

**BLOCKADE**

WEST INDIES

Tropic of Cancer

80°W 70°W

20°N



Exports to Britain –  
High British Tariffs  
discouraged American  
Exports to Britain

West Indies Trade –  
Britain closed many ports to  
American ships

American Trade Route –  
Spain closed the lower  
Mississippi River to US  
Shipping, hurting Western  
Trade with Eastern Markets

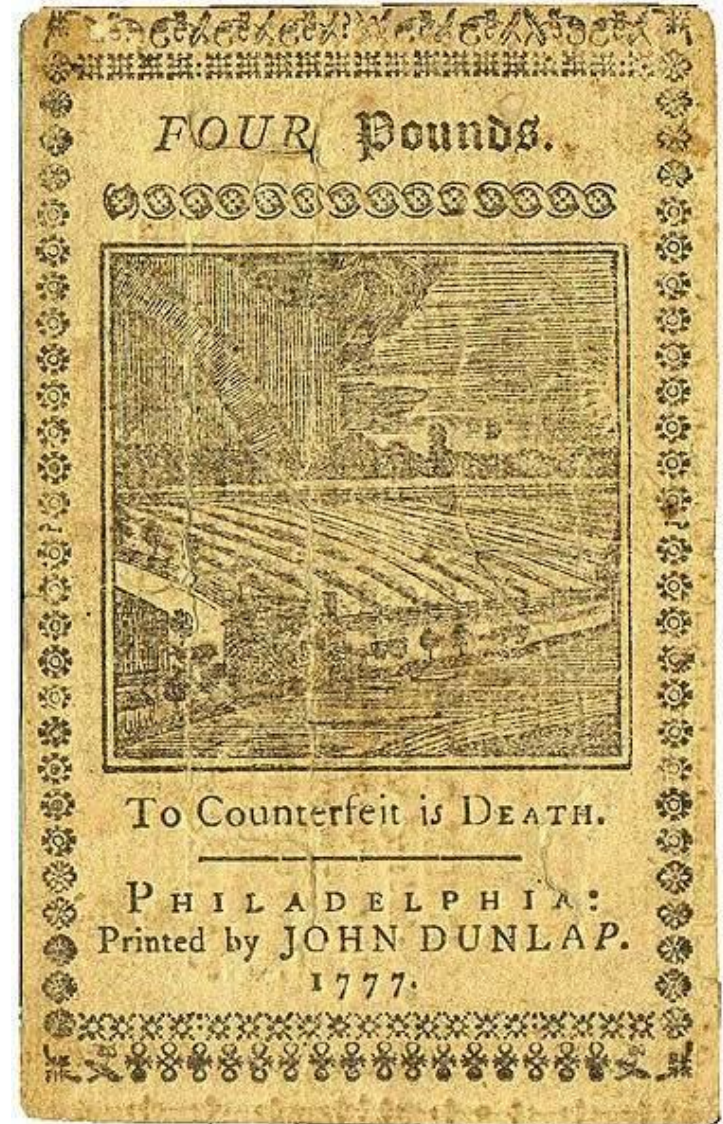


# Impact of Closed Markets

- American exports dropped and British imports increased
  - **British could sell their imports for lower than American made products**
- Congress could not pass tariffs
- Congress could not make states pass tariffs

# Economic Depression

- States began to pass their own trade laws, which were all different
- This made it difficult to trade from state to state
  - interstate commerce





- States begin printing large amounts of money to pay for the war.
  - The result is inflation- increased prices for goods & services combined with reduced value of money
  - Money had different values from state to state.
  - Depression – period when economic activity slows & unemployment increases



- Problems with trade & inflation caused an economic **depression!**
  - period when economic activity slows & unemployment increases

# Shays' Rebellion

- Massachusetts-they raised taxes on land to raise money to pay for the war--causing farmers to be hit hard.
- If the farmers could not pay the tax, land was taken, sold at 1/3 price and the farmer jailed.



- August 1786- Massachusetts farmers began to revolt
- Led by Daniel Shays the rebels tried to shut down the Supreme Court in MA.
- Rebels were defeated at a battle in Springfield, MA.(1787)



*Shays' troops are repulsed from the armory at Springfield, Massachusetts in early 1787.*



*Daniel Shays' Farmhouse in Pelham, MA.*

- Shays' Rebellion showed the weakness of the Confederation government
- It made Congress take a second look at flaws of the Articles of Confederation

# A Call for Change

## **Weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation**

- Most power held by states
- One branch of government
- Legislative branch has few powers
- No executive branch
- No judicial system
- No system of checks and balances

- It became increasingly clear that reform of the Articles of Confederation was necessary



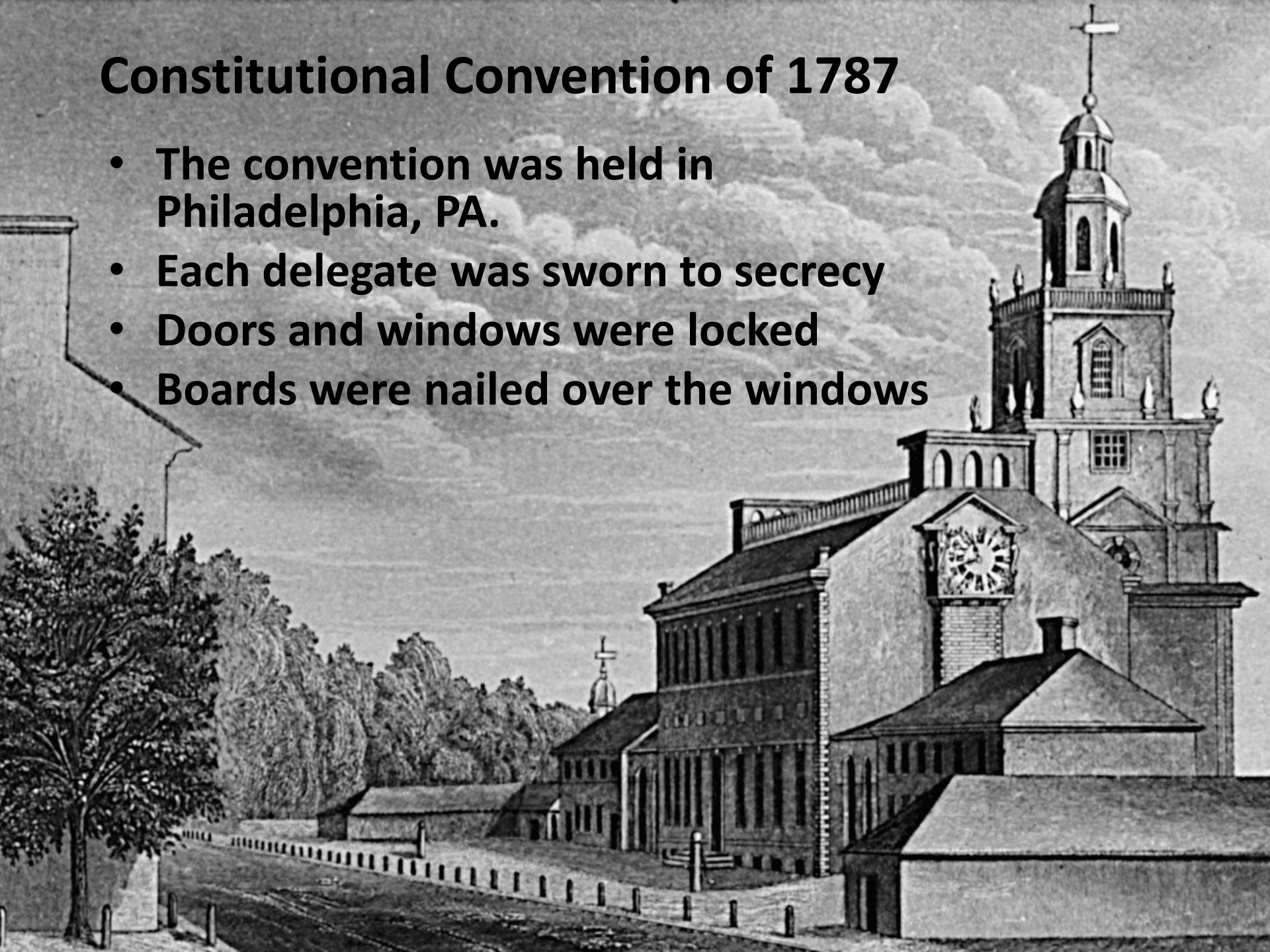
## Section 3: Creating the Constitution

**Day 4: The Constitutional Convention**

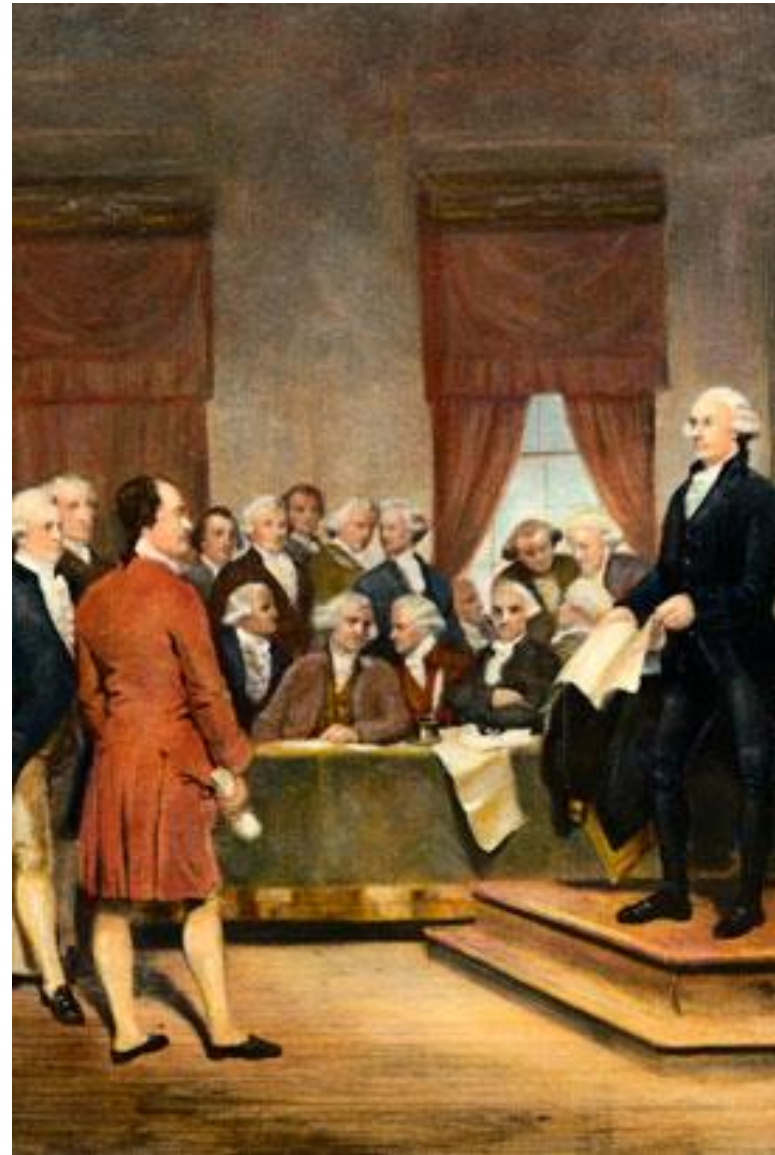


# Constitutional Convention of 1787

- The convention was held in Philadelphia, PA.
- Each delegate was sworn to secrecy
- Doors and windows were locked
- Boards were nailed over the windows



- Benjamin Franklin was the oldest: 81
- **James Madison** – “Father of the Constitution”
- **George Washington** came out of retirement to be president of the Convention
- **Main Purpose:**
  - **To improve the Articles of Confederation**



# 2 plans Introduced

## Virginia Plan

- Edmund Randolph presented **Virginia Plan**
- Gave more power to central government
- Congress would be made up of two houses
- Representatives would be chosen based on state populations
- Supported by large states

## New Jersey Plan

- William Paterson presented **New Jersey Plan**
- Gave more power to state governments
- Congress would have one house
- Representatives would be equal for each state
- Supported by small states

# The Great Compromise

- After a month of debate, still deadlocked
- Roger Sherman proposed **the Great Compromise**
- The Virginia and New Jersey Plans would be combined

## Bicameral Legislature (2 Houses)

### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

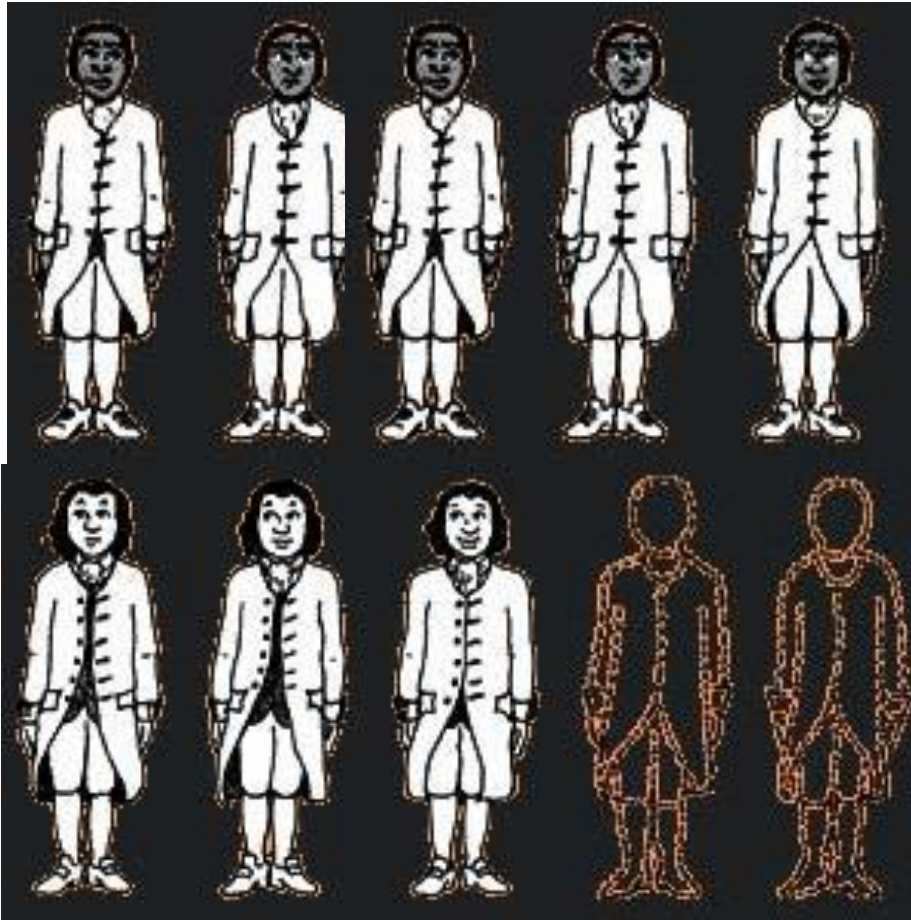
- Number of representatives based on state population

### SENATE

- Number of Representatives equal from each state



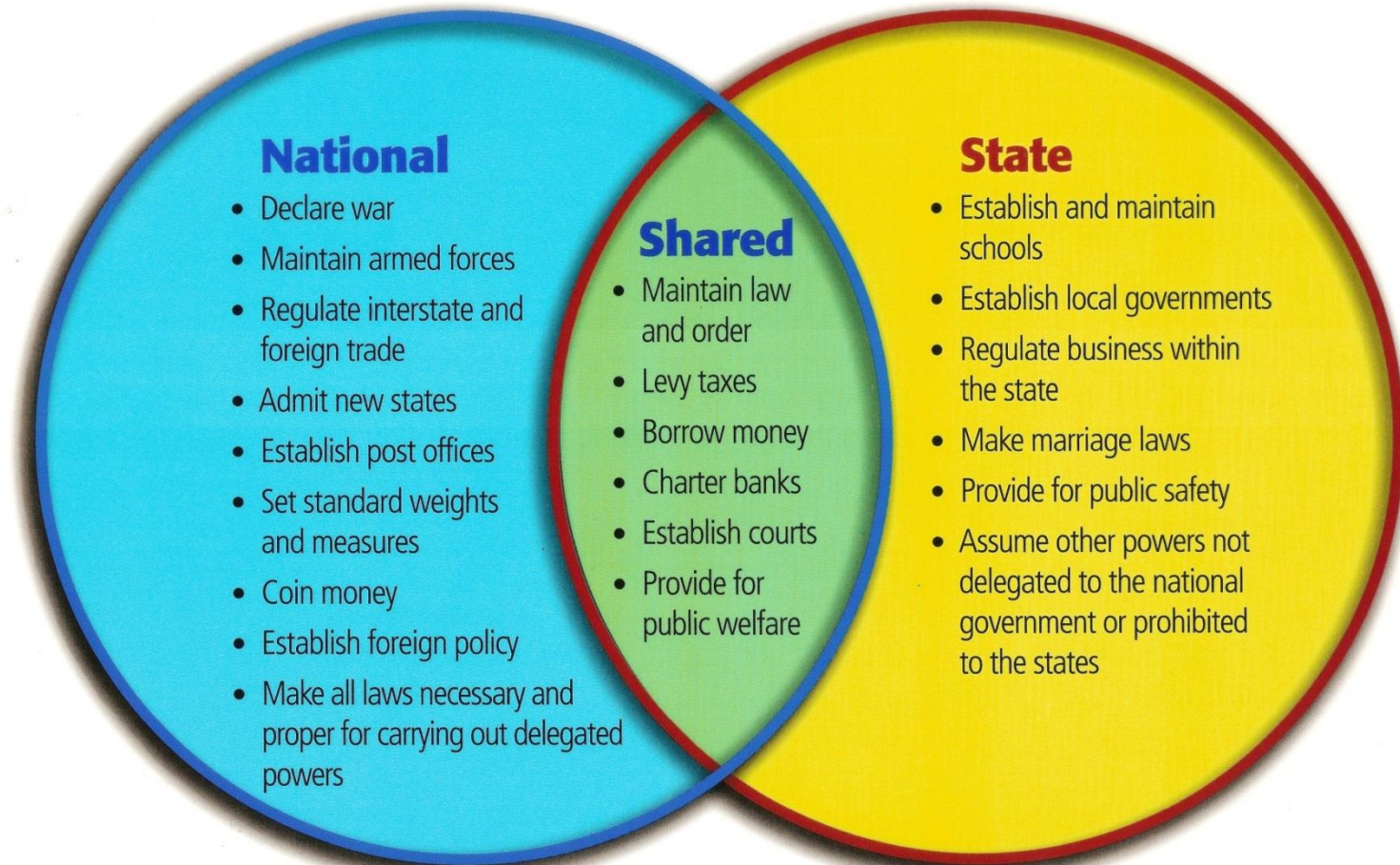
# The Three-Fifths Compromise



- Population determination
- Southern delegates wanted slaves counted as part of their population.
- Northerners disagreed: wanted slaves to determine taxes but not representation.
- A compromise was made.
- $\frac{3}{5}$  of a state's slave population would be counted for representation AND taxes.
- That means every 5 slaves equaled 3 free persons

**Gouverneur Morris** was an outspoken opponent of the three-fifths compromise

# Federalism

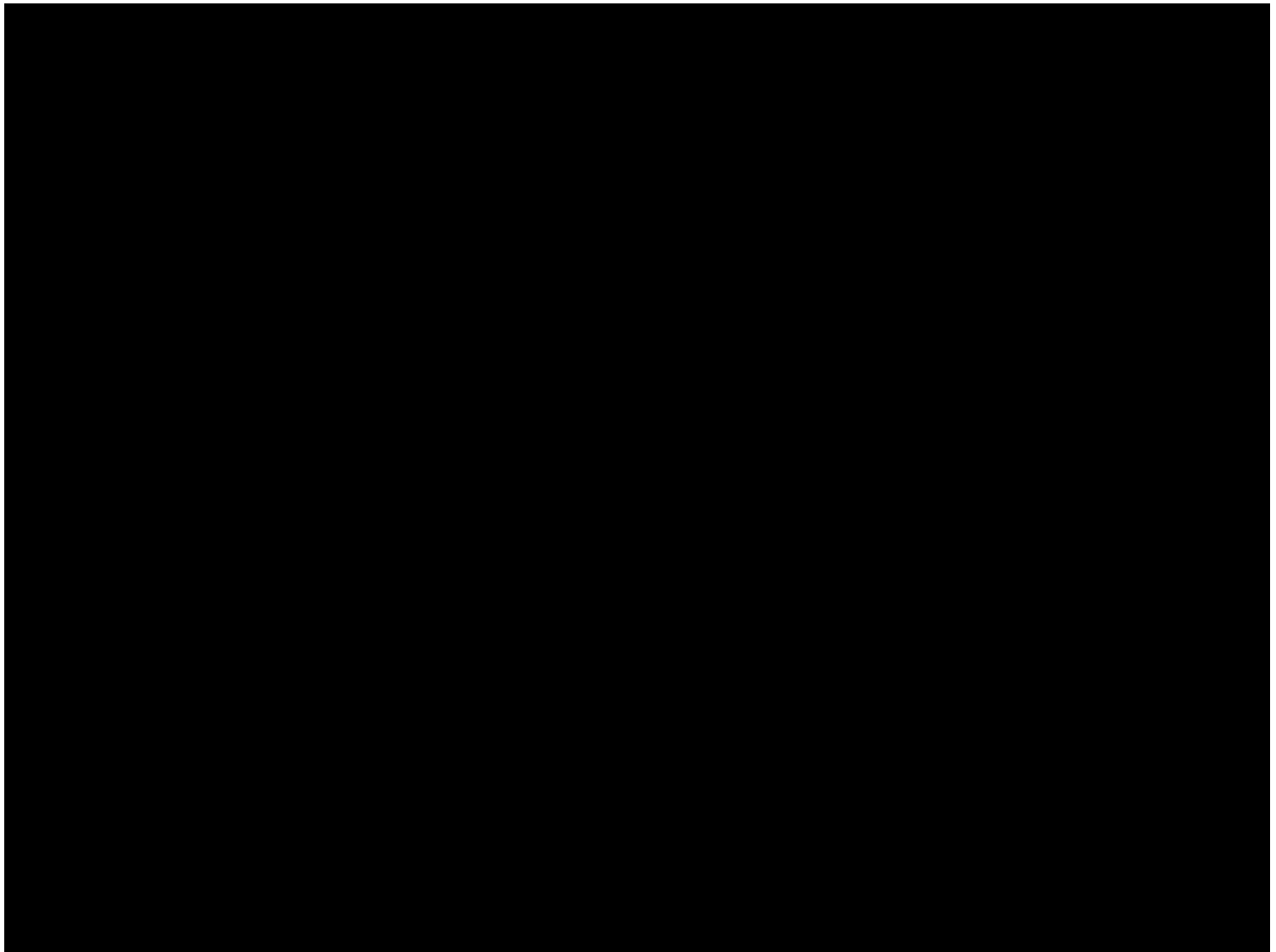


**Federalism** created to keep a balance of power between the central and state governments.

# The Constitution:

## Supreme Law of the Land

- No state could make laws or take actions that went against the Constitution
- Any dispute between State & Federal governments settled by the Supreme Court based on constitution
- Constitution became final and supreme authority



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x5M50xBz1cU>

# Separation of Powers

## U.S. Constitution

### Legislative Branch (Congress)

- Writes the laws
- Confirms presidential appointments
- Approves treaties
- Grants money
- Declares war

### Executive Branch (President)

- Proposes laws
- Administers the laws
- Commands armed forces
- Appoints ambassadors and other officials
- Conducts foreign policy
- Makes treaties

### Judicial Branch (Supreme Court)

- Interprets the Constitution and other laws
- Reviews lower-court decisions

**Separation of Powers acts as Checks and Balances**





**Legislative Branch** – Congress; makes and passes laws

Congress made up of House of Representatives & Senate



## **Executive Branch —**

President and cabinet. Makes sure the law is carried out





**Judicial Branch** – Courts; interprets laws, punishes criminals, and settles disputes between states



## EXAMPLE:

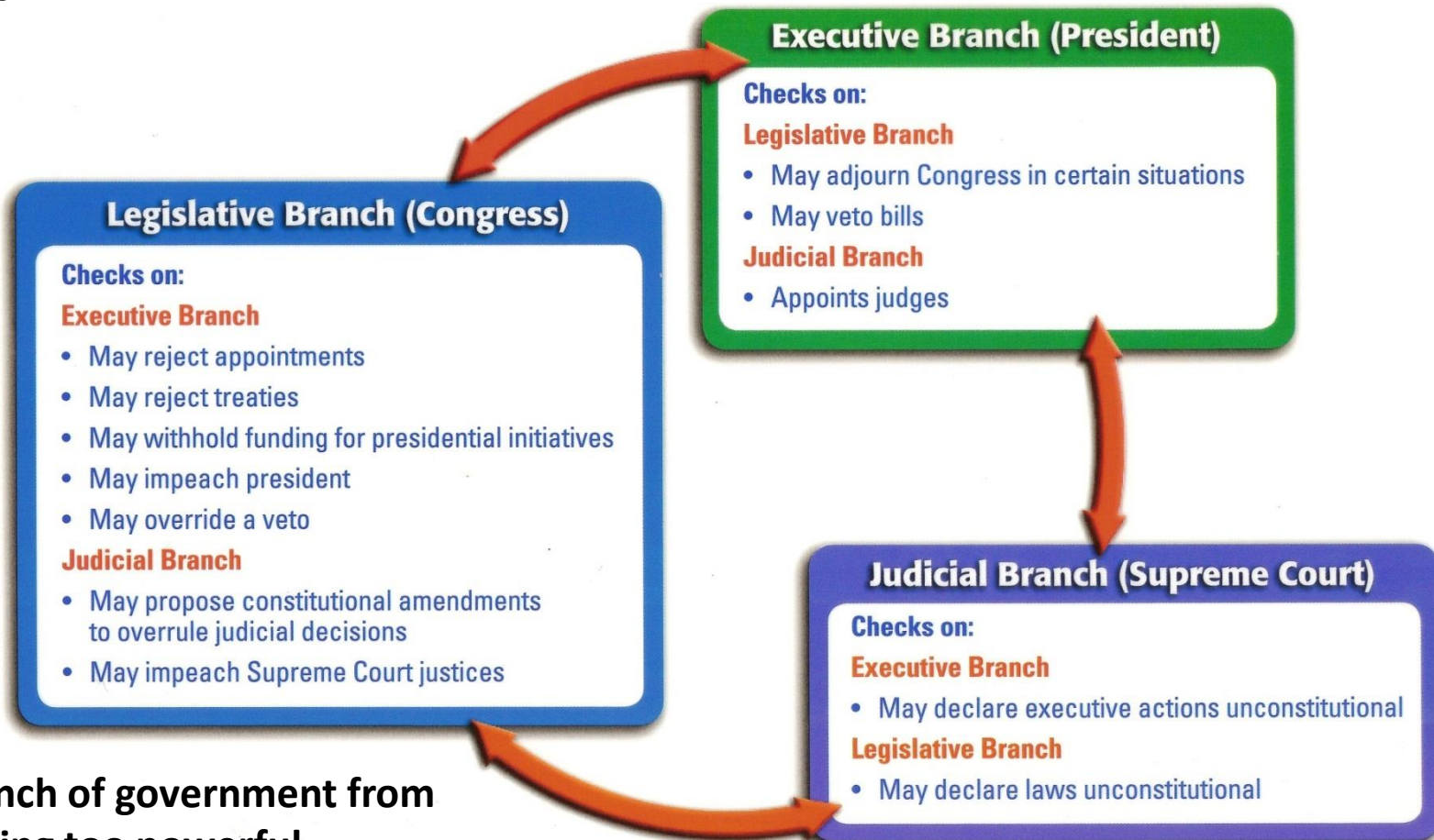
Congress passes a bill

President can veto the bill

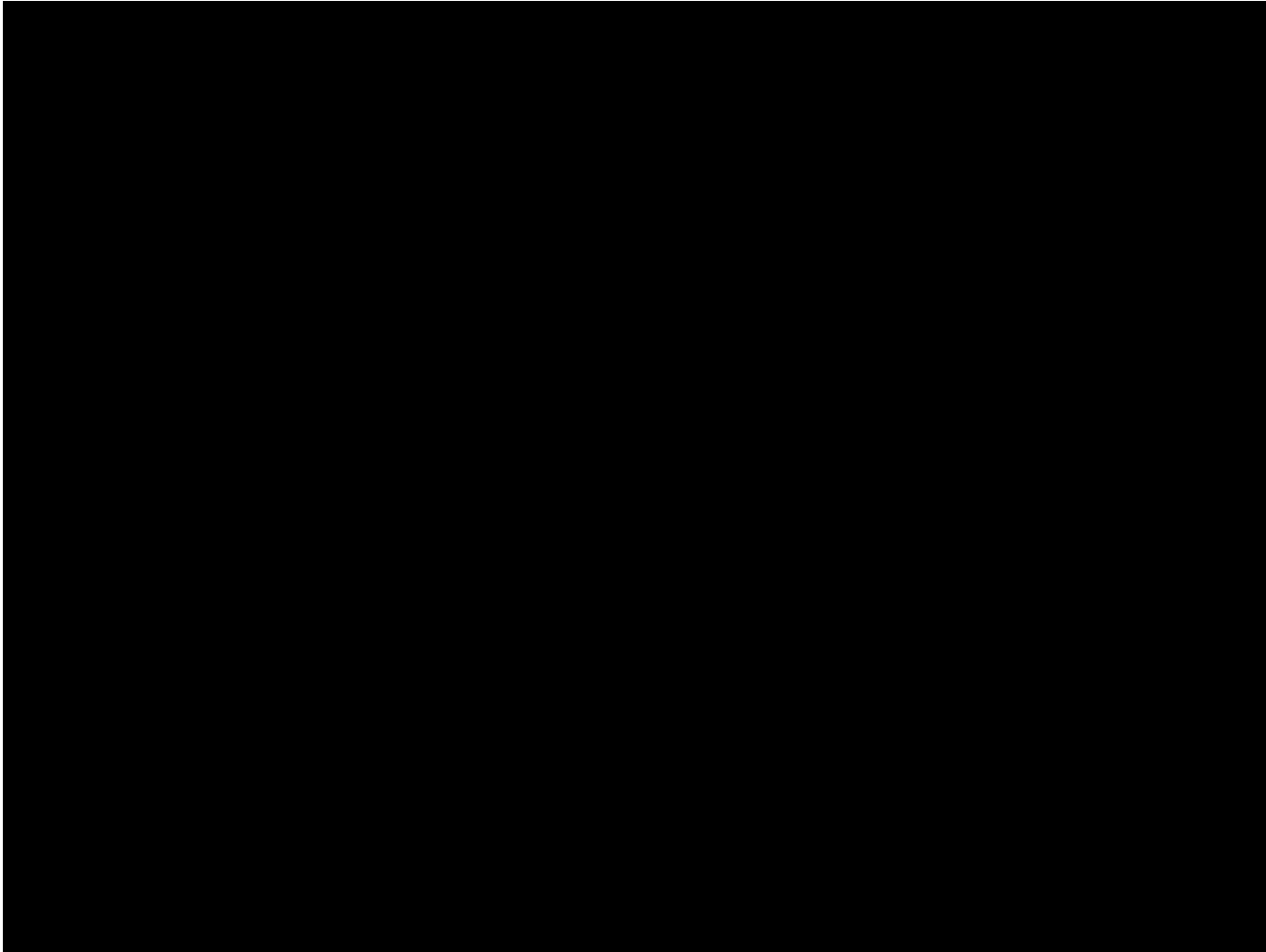
Congress can override veto with 2/3 vote

Supreme Court can kill the bill if it violates the Constitution

## Checks and Balances



keeps any branch of government from becoming too powerful



<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tyeJ55o3EI0>

## **The Constitution Strengthens the National Government**

### **Strengths of the Constitution**

- ✓ most power held by national government
- ✓ three branches of government
- ✓ legislative branch has many powers
- ✓ executive branch led by president
- ✓ judicial branch to review the laws
- ✓ firm system of checks and balances

### **Weaknesses of the Articles of Confederation**

- most power held by states
- one branch of government
- legislative branch has few powers
- no executive branch
- no judicial system
- no system of checks and balances



## Section 4: Ratification



# The Constitutional Debate



## Federalists

- Supported the Constitution
- James Madison, Alexander Hamilton & John Jay
- Felt the Constitution balanced all views

## Anti-Federalists

- People who opposed the Constitution
- George Mason, Sam Adams, Patrick Henry
- Felt the Constitution did not provide for individual rights

# Federalist Papers

- One of the most important defenses of the Constitution was a series of essays known as the **Federalist Papers**.
  - The essays were signed anonymous under the name Publius but were written by Hamilton, Madison, and Jay.
- Tried to reassure Americans that the central government would not overpower the states.

## **Federalist Paper No. 10**

- Written by James Madison
- argued that the diversity of the US would prevent any single group from dominating the govt.
- Because the Federal government is made up of states with different interest but equal representation, no single state would control the government

## **Federalist Paper No. 51**

- Written by James Madison
- The Separation of Powers would create a system of checks and balances to stop any one branch of government from becoming too powerful
- "Ambition must be made to counteract ambition."

# Bill of Rights

- The Bill of Rights were added to the Constitution as amendments
- **Amendments** = official changes
- The Bill of Rights are 10 amendments intended to protect the rights of the citizens—
  - protects individual rights so that the abuses listed in the Declaration of Independence would be illegal.



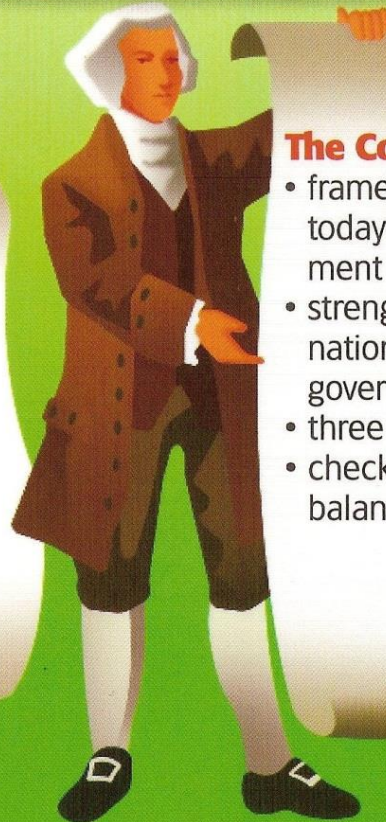
# Ratification

- 1<sup>st</sup> state - Delaware -December 7, 1787
- 9<sup>th</sup> state - New Hampshire – June 21,1787
- 13<sup>th</sup> state - Rhode Island – May 1790
- One reason the US Constitution has survived more than 200 years is the flexibility of the Constitution to meet the needs of a changing nation.



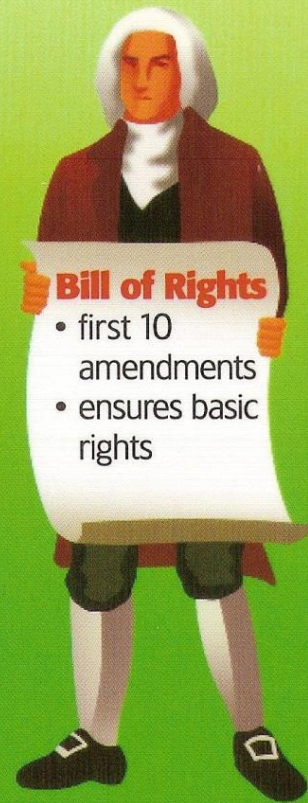
### **The Articles of Confederation**

- first government of United States
- weak union of states
- weaknesses led to Shays's Rebellion



### **The Constitution**

- framework of today's government
- strengthened national government
- three branches
- checks and balances



### **Bill of Rights**

- first 10 amendments
- ensures basic rights